

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow by choosing the option you consider the most appropriate.

I. thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean
Angles of rain and lightning:

- (i) Clouds are like leaves because
 - (a) the trees touch the sky
 - (b) they are crumpled like leaves
 - (c) they are scattered far and wide like leaves
 - (d) they bring rain and thunder
- (ii) 'Tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean' refers to
 - (a) clouds scattered like leaves
 - (b) branches of a great tree
 - (c) a jungle crowded with trees
 - (d) an imaginary tree of cloud masses
- (iii) 'Angles of rain and lightening' refers to
 - (a) the west wind
 - (b) the clouds
 - (c) the rain
 - (d) the leaves

II. thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulcher,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
lack rain, and fire, and hail will burst:

- (i) The West Wind is the dirge of the dying year as
 - (a) it produces musical effect while blowing
 - (b) it produces a saddening effect
 - (c) it blows when the year is about to end
 - (d) it is the harbinger of a new year

- (ii) 'Vast sepulchre' means
 - (a) a majestic building
 - (b) a dead body
 - (c) a long and a dark night
 - (d) a big stone structure where some one is buried
- (iii) What do 'black rain, fire and hail' symbolise ?
 - (a) forces of death and destruction
 - (b) snow storm and blizzards
 - (c) disturbance in the sky
 - (d) weather changes on earth

III. If even

I were as in my boyhood, and could be
 The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven
 As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
 Scarce seem'd a vision, I would ne'er have striven
 As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need

- (i) How was the poet a comrade of the West Wind in his boyhood ?
 - (a) he was friends with the wind
 - (b) he was energetic and fast like the wind
 - (c) he was a destroyer like the wind
 - (d) he was a preserver like the wind
- (ii) The expression : "Scarce seem'd a vision" means
 - (a) something seen in dreams
 - (b) a vision of the future
 - (c) a task considered easy
 - (d) a dream that is scary
- (iii) The 'sore need' of the poem is
 - (a) to have the power of spreading the message of his poetry
 - (b) to become young again
 - (c) to get rid of his ailments
 - (d) to travel extensively

IV. Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!

I fall upon the thorns of life I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed

One too like thee – tameless, and swift, and proud.

- (i) The expression : ‘thorns of life’ refers to
 - (a) short span of life
 - (b) joys and sorrows of life
 - (c) the trials and tribulations of life
 - (d) the negative side of life
- (ii) The passage of time has the poet
 - (a) weakened
 - (b) empowered
 - (c) disheartened
 - (d) irritated
- (iii) The figure of speech used in the first line is
 - (a) simile
 - (b) metaphor
 - (c) alliteration
 - (d) invocations

Answer the following questions: (75-100 words)

1. What do you understand by ‘dirge’? Why does the poet call the West Wind to be a dirge of a dying year?
2. Is the poet justified in calling the West Wind to be impetuous? If so, what does the poet want this “impetuous one” to do?
3. How does the poet in “Ode to the West Wind” express his desire to escape the ‘thorns of life’?
4. In the poem ‘Ode to the West Wind’ the poet has established a link between his own personality and the personality of the West Wind? What is the link? What appeal does he make to the West Wind? Why? **(150 words)**